

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE <i>2/3/94</i>
TO: [REDACTED]		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING <i>RAD</i>	EO 12958 6.1(c)<10Yrs (U)
REMARKS: <i>See DDI's note. O down piece</i>		
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Office of Slavic and
Eurasian Analysis

11 January 1994

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~~ADDS~~

NOTE FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence
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Doug:

Here is a thoughtful piece by [REDACTED] that I thought you might find interesting. [REDACTED] has sent it to only a couple of working level contacts.)

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John E. McLaughlin
Director of Slavic and Eurasian Analysis

Attachment:
OSE 226-94

*Threat - It was indeed
interesting and thought provoking.
I tend to the "suspicious
agnosticism" approach on
this one.*

12 JAN 1994

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MEMORANDUM FOR: John McLaughlin

/OSE

Thanks. It was indeed interesting and thought provoking. I tend to the "suspicious agnosticism" approach on this one.

Doug MacEachin

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05 January 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: General Odom's Assessment of Russian Policy
Toward the New Independent States [REDACTED]

1. The question of "what the Russians are up to", vis-a-vis the other former Soviet republics, has become a central issue in the discussion of Russia's future and its relations with the West. Zhirinovskiy's success in the recent elections has enhanced the topicality of this question. It is clear enough that, over the past year, Russian policy toward the New Independent States (NIS) has evolved in a more assertive direction.¹ Russia has sought to strengthen the "Commonwealth of Independent States" (CIS), used economic leverage to gain political concessions, vigorously asserted the right to defend the interests of the Russian minority population in the NIS, tried to dominate the mediating role in conflicts among CIS member states and between them and ethno-territorial groupings within them, and sustained or reasserted a Russian military presence along the southern tier in Moldova, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. What lies behind this assertiveness; what does it mean? [REDACTED]

2. One influential school of thought among Western observers holds that we are witnessing a recrudescence of traditional Russian imperialism. General William Odom--who has just completed a tour through Central Asia and the Caucasus with his former NSC boss, Zbigniew Brzezinski--has begun to rival Paul Goble among the vocal advocates of this position. In a major article in *The Washington Post* on 5 December 1993 (see attachment) General Odom asserted that:

- The Russian government has been pursuing two different foreign policies over the past year: a liberal, "Westernizing" policy toward the US, Europe, and East Asia; and a "Slavophile," imperialist policy toward the "near abroad."

1. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: General Odom's Assessment of Russian Policy
Toward the New Independent States [REDACTED]

- The liberal line, "centered in the Foreign Ministry, and supported by liberal reformers around President Boris Yel'tsin," has been losing out in a struggle with the neo-imperialists, centered in the Ministry of Defense.
- The driving force motivating the Slavophiles has been the "yearning for empire."
- The evidence indicative of such motivation consists of MOD entanglement of Russia on the side of the old communists in the civil war in Tajikistan, covert intervention in and manipulation of the Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazian conflicts to reestablish Russian control in the Caucasus, and a "complex and duplicitous" strategy for breaking Ukrainian independence through preserving a Russian military enclave on Ukraine's southwest border (the 14th Army in the "Trans-Dniester Republic"), challenging Ukrainian "control" of the Black Sea Fleet, manipulating the Ukrainian oil supply, instigating strikes in the Donetsk region, and using "diplomatic pressure to get Ukraine to give up its nuclear weapons which remain under Russian control."

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- The acceptance by Yel'tsin of neo-imperialism toward the NIS represents an alliance with the Devil to gain military support for himself, and to protect his domestic equities of political reform (the Constitution) and marketization.
- [REDACTED]

3. Some of the main propositions that General Odom advances are basically wrong. The evidence strongly suggests that there have not been two distinct Russian foreign policies for the "far abroad" and "near abroad." On the contrary, much of what Andrey Kozyrev and other top officials in the MFA were doing in 1993 was precisely to seek Western acceptance of and support for the activist "southern" strategy. Indeed, Kozyrev himself has taken the lead in promoting "peacekeeping" on CIS territory, sometimes out in front of the MOD--while acknowledging that only Russia can or will provide the bulk of the military force required for this mission. He has repeatedly endorsed Russian military action in Tajikistan--a move seen by some liberals outside the Government as leading to a new "Afghanistan." [REDACTED]

4. By the same token, the Russian military has not neatly fit the "neo-imperialist" mold. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: General Odom's Assessment of Russian Policy
Toward the New Independent States [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

5. Nor does the evidence sustain the argument that Yel'tsin gave way reluctantly to "the military" or was forced to support a more robust line toward the NIS just to protect his flanks politically--even though there was such sentiment in the Russian parliament. Yel'tsin himself propounded the key principle that it was Russia's duty to "guarantee stability" in the CIS, he was an early advocate of strengthening the Russian military presence in Tajikistan, and his behavior on many other issues throughout the year was thoroughly consistent with personal commitment to the firm line toward the NIS. [REDACTED]

6. Other elements of Russian behavior are also difficult to reconcile with General Odom's thesis:

- Russia is in fact withdrawing its military forces from the Baltic states, and is simply trying to use its ever-diminishing leverage to strike as good a deal as possible.
- The Russian leadership (including Yel'tsin personally) opted decisively in 1993 **against** creation of a genuine "joint" CIS armed force, in favor of the eventual creation (albeit with Russian assistance) of individual NIS armies.
- The Russian Government has repeatedly expressed its commitment to the principles of peaceful settlement of disputes, territorial integrity, and no border changes in the CIS, and it forthrightly condemned the Russian parliament's attempt unilaterally to subordinate the city of Sevastopol in Crimea to Russia.
- The Russian Government has sought to gain UN, CSCE, and other international involvement in the resolution of conflicts on CIS territory--something that a "real" Russian imperialist power would not have tolerated, much less solicited. [REDACTED]

7. But some Russian leadership attitudes and behavior can certainly be viewed as compatible with the neo-imperialist thesis. In particular:

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Toward the New Independent States [REDACTED]

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- On the "emotional" side, many members of the current Russian political elite are not convinced that the splintering of the Soviet republics that took place in late 1991 was inevitable. Almost all probably believe that the breakup of the Union was highly undesirable. And all the top leaders--but especially Yel'tsin--are on record as detecting and applauding a perceived accelerating trend toward "integration" of the CIS states in 1993.
- All the top Russian leaders have talked casually about modalities of close future association among the CIS states or have otherwise publicly used language in politically incorrect ways that, non-Russians say, betray a mentality irretrievably afflicted with Great Russian Chauvinism.

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- [REDACTED]
- Russian insistence on observance of the principles of maintenance of the territorial integrity of CIS states, autonomy for ethno-territorial minorities (like the Russians in the Dniester region, Abkhaz and Ossetians in Georgia, Karabakhtsy in Azerbaijan, and--not now, but perhaps sometime in the future--Russians in eastern Ukraine and northern Kazakhstan), and peaceful settlement of disputes implicitly calls for a Russian military presence to manage conflicts between such minorities and the dominant ethnic groups in other CIS states. Insistence on these principles by Russia could be--and from some host states' (Moldova, Georgia) standpoint already is--used to justify an unnecessary Russian military presence and greater minority autonomy than the situation warrants.
- A broad spectrum of Russian leaders, including Grachev and Kozyrev, referred openly in 1993 to Russian geopolitical

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Toward the New Independent States [REDACTED]

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and economic "interests" in the other CIS states, and have sought enhanced Russian influence there.

- Russia repeatedly brought economic pressure to bear on other NIS in 1993 to promote political or economic aims. [REDACTED]

8. A key issue in evaluating General Odom's thesis is the question of Russian security. Critics of his position would argue that it ignores the massive security problems and challenges to Russia's legitimate interests as a great power that Russian leaders confront in a very tough "neighborhood." These familiar problems include:

- The problematic statehood and durability of some of Russia's CIS partners--their potential for what Kozyrev has called "Somalia-ization."
- The vulnerability of the ethnic Russian minority on the one hand to discrimination, and on the other hand to crisis-provoking extremist mobilization.
- Serious potential spillover effects into Russia of conflict between dominant ethnic groups and ethno-territorial minorities in other NIS.
- Military, political, and ethno-religious penetration by states outside the CIS which challenges Russia's geopolitical position--whether by Turkey, Iran, China, or other powers.
- The twofold Ukrainian danger of nuclearization and socioeconomic implosion.
- The possible descent of Central Asia into chaos, generating a tidal wave of refugees, violence, and political extremism. [REDACTED]

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9. By implication, General Odom seems to be saying that "security" arguments are a pretext--deliberate or unwitting--for behavior driven by an imperial urge. Since we cannot look into the souls--whether conscious or unconscious--of Yel'tsin and his colleagues, we cannot conclusively sort out the driving impulses here. What we can say, however, is that (a) from our

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outside analytic standpoint these are indeed potentially real and serious security problems facing Russia; (b) their gravity is magnified by Russia's own current domestic vulnerability to socioeconomic disorder, state fragmentation, and overthrow of democracy; and (c) Russian leaders give every appearance of responding to them. [REDACTED]

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10. General Odom argues that liberal development of Russia depends on Russia's leadership adhering to the "western axis" and playing down the "southern axis"--in which Russia "becomes entangled in the domestic concerns of the newly independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus," gets trapped into supporting "old communist elites," and is compelled to remilitarize. There can be no question but that these are dangers. Nevertheless, the difficulty with this argument is that any Russian government that seeks to protect democracy in Russia **must** engage itself seriously along the "southern axis," be prepared to use military force, and "intervene in the internal affairs" of other CIS states. There is no serious option of pulling up the drawbridge when the moat has not been dug and the wall not constructed, when stabilization in most of the CIS arena cannot succeed without the presence of some military muscle, and when nobody else--not the UN, CSCE, NATO, nor anyone else--will do the job. The question then becomes, both for Russia and the West, precisely **how** Russia deals with the "southern axis." [REDACTED]

11. Asymmetry of resources--manpower, natural wealth, military force, etc.--will always affect Russia's relations with the former Soviet republics. But a Russian predisposition to promote closer association among the NIS, even when this reflects the more chauvinistic strain of Soviet and Russian political culture, does not necessarily predetermine an "imperial" outcome. Key aspects of the future are still open. It makes a critical difference if Russia exercises influence rather than outright domination; if it relies on economic pressure rather than military control; if its military presence acquires a treaty basis rather than continues without consent;

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if its covert action focuses on intelligence gathering and influence operations rather than on sabotage and subversion; and if, over the mid-to-longer term, it seeks to promote a "stability" that is based on democratization, marketization, and respect for minority rights rather than simply on oppression of the population by client regimes. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
Senior Analyst
Office of Slavic and Eurasian Analysis

Attachment:
Washington Post Item (5 Dec 93)

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ATTACHMENT

The Ambivalent Bear

IMPERIAL, From C1

Russia's unique character, and insisted that it must follow a Slavic development pattern, a pattern incompatible with Western liberalism.

The contemporary Westernizer faction, centered in the Foreign Ministry and a few other departments, seeks to achieve what its lineal antecedents could not—tying Russia to the West in a way that insures a liberal path of domestic development. Sergei Blagovolin, an academic and one of the more articulate Westernizers, speaks of three axes of Russian foreign policy: West, East and South.

The southern axis, in his view, is most dangerous. Were Russia to become entangled in the domestic concerns of the newly-independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus, liberal development in Russia would be impossible. Military priorities would again become primary. Already Russia is seeking to shore up the old communist elites still ruling in most of these countries. The strengthening of these ties would also reinforce conservative and reactionary political groups in Russia.

Blagovolin argues that the western axis—toward Europe and the United States—must have primacy. The rationale for this strategy is simple and tough-minded. Keeping Russia from slipping back into its old imperial pattern vis-a-vis the Commonwealth and Eastern Europe is the *sine qua non* for keeping Russia on the long and difficult path toward domestic liberalism. To succeed, the Westernizers must avoid the creation of a wall of hostile states in Eastern Europe that would isolate Russia. Since that region is now a strategic vacuum that the liberal Russians do not want to fill, they want to encourage NATO to fill it by extending some form of membership to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Thus the Westernizers hope to make NATO a cornerstone of Russia's own security. The eastern axis, in this view, is really an extension of the western axis: through cooperation with the United States, Russia should seek to integrate its economy and security concerns with the prosperous countries of East Asia.

Quite a different strategy has taken shape

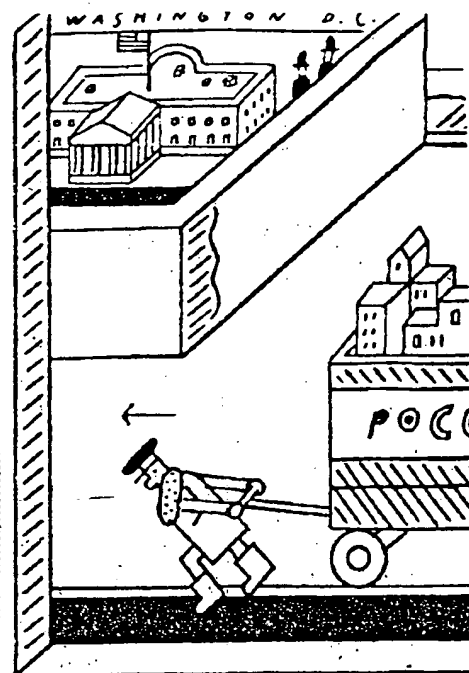
within the Defense Ministry. It was first articulated at the General Staff Academy at the end of May 1992 as a formal statement of Russian military doctrine. It insists that the former Soviet territories be maintained as a "common strategic space" for military purposes. And it identifies the West as the potential enemy that must not be allowed to fill the vacuum in Eastern Europe, the Baltic states and the Black Sea littoral or Central Asia.

Implicitly, this document makes the southern foreign policy axis, i.e., "the near abroad," primary. It is a thinly veiled plan for reasserting Russian imperial rule over most of the former Soviet Union, justified as a way of protecting the substantial Russian populations in those areas.

Throughout 1992 and 1993, the Defense Ministry has taken the lead in Russia's foreign policy toward the near abroad while the Foreign Ministry has been left to deal with the far abroad. Occasionally the Defense Ministry has asserted its influence over far abroad matters. For example, when Yeltsin visited Poland and the Czech Republic in September, he said publicly that those countries were free to join NATO if they wanted to. But shortly after his return to Moscow, Yeltsin wrote letters to both governments saying that the Russian government would not look favorably on their joining NATO. Around this same time, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev proclaimed publicly that Poland was a major military threat to Russia. Clearly, Grachev and/or like-minded officials had prevailed on Yeltsin to reverse himself.

In Central Asia, the Defense Ministry has entangled Russia on the side of the old communists. In Tajikistan in particular, the Russian military has become a key participant in a large civil war. In the Caucasus, the Russians have secretly trained Armenians to push Azerbaijan out of Nagorno-Karabakh, routing the Azerbaijani forces. At the same, in Azerbaijan, it has backed a military ouster of a popularly elected president and the installation of a former KGB leader, Gaidar Aliyev, who is restoring close ties with Moscow. Firmly ensconced on both sides of the Azeri-Armenian conflict, Russia is now in a position to bring both parties under its control.

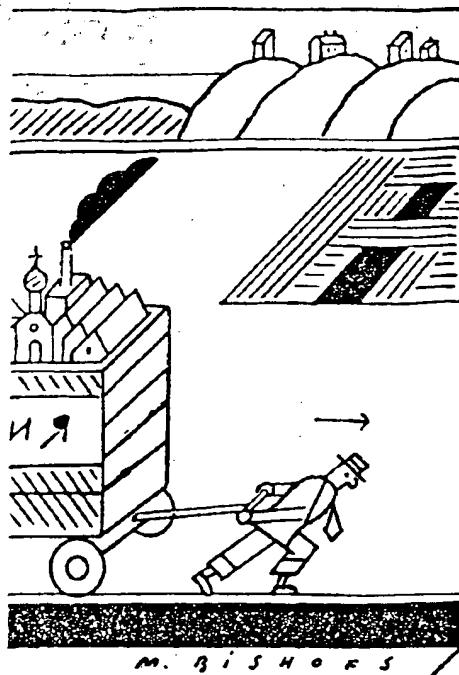
In Georgia, the Russian military supports



the Abkhazian separatists and also has ties to the warring groups of Georgians who seek to unseat former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze as head of state. Realizing that he is cornered by this Russian strategy, Shevardnadze has resorted to asking the Russian military to save him from his internal opponents. And this was only a few days and weeks after blaming Russia for his difficulties. Thus the Russian military has trapped the man whom they blame for destroying the Soviet position in Central Europe.

The Russian strategy for breaking Ukrainian independence is equally complex and duplicitous, although not as far advanced. The Russian 14th Army in the Trans-Dniester Republic has taken that region away from Moldova and placed a Russian enclave on Ukraine's southwest border. Russia has challenged Ukraine's control of the former Soviet naval fleet in the Black Sea. It has manipulated its supply of oil to Ukraine, attempted to instigate strikes among miners in the Donetsk region, and, along with the Western powers, used diplomatic pressure to get Ukraine to give up its nuclear weapons which remain under Russian control.

In short, over the last year the Russian foreign policy toward the near abroad has begun to win out over the foreign policy for the far abroad. The shift became visible when Andrei Kozyrev, the foreign minister,



BY MARIS BISHOFS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

addressed the United Nations in September, seeking that body's approval for Russian imperialism in the Commonwealth. He asserted Russia's "peacemaking" role "first of all in the territory of the former U.S.S.R.," insisting "all these problems are too serious . . . to speculate about 'neo-imperial' plans of Russia."

Yeltsin's alliance with the military and the police has succeeded. During the parliamentary rebellion in September, the president enjoyed the backing of the security forces. One can hardly condemn Yeltsin for making common cause with them; without removing the parliament from the political struggle, effective progress toward a market economy and a new constitution was impossible. Yet the risks of that alliance are great.

If Yeltsin cannot liberate himself from the policy of his new allies, the contemporary Russian Westernizers will lose the battle. Thus U.S. policy depends almost entirely on Yeltsin's ability to make another dramatic turn in policy, jettisoning his reactionary constituency.

The extent to which the Clinton administration is willing to go on gambling on Yeltsin will become apparent in its policy toward Eastern Europe. The immediate issue is the request by Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary for admission to NATO, a matter that will be considered at

the annual NATO meeting next month. If the United States does not back their request to the fullest, it will be undercut those Russian Westernizers who have provided a compelling rationale for NATO's eastward expansion.

An effective U.S. strategy needs three tracks, not just one:

- The first track, "cooperation," needs more imagination. Russia should be made a permanent member of the G-7, the grouping of the world's leading economic states. This would put more pressure on Moscow to continue economic reforms, and it would dignify Russia formally as a great power with a critical role in both Europe and East Asia, something the reactionaries believe Russia has lost.

- A second track, "reproach," is urgently needed for the Commonwealth states. The West cannot become directly involved in these regions, but it can certainly mobilize Western public awareness of Russia meddling there, condemning it unambiguously. Given Shevardnadze's key role in ending the Cold War and settling the German reunification issue without a conflict, the United States' supine behavior during his recent trials is reprehensible. He deserves at least moral support.

- The third track, "consolidation," would make permanent the gains of the past four years in Central and Eastern Europe. Bringing Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO is imperative as a hedge against Yeltsin's losing. The new NATO can serve as a roof over consolidated Europe. Without it, political instability in Eastern Europe will grow more likely. The chaos in former Yugoslavia ought to quicken Western resolve in this regard.

Coupling the current policy of cooperation with policies of reproach and consolidation would not only serve as a hedge against failure of the Russian liberals. It would actually strengthen Russia's Westernizers. Genuine liberal reform in both Russia and the Soviet Union has never thrived in periods of détente and preemptive concessions by the West. Liberals have gained the upper hand only when the West's strength is reflected in a refusal to accommodate Russian imperialism. That historical record needs to be kept in mind as Russia goes to vote.